

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8811

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 HELSINKI 1363

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TAGS: EAIR, FI
SUBJ: CIVAIR: LFAS CHARTER FLIGHTS

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SUMMARY: EMBASSY LEARNED YESTERDAY FROM PAN AM HELSINKI THAT CAB HAS TAKEN FIRM POSITION TO DENY ALL, NOT JUST PAN AM, CHARTER FLIGHTS FOR THE LEAGUE OF FINNISH AMERICAN SOCIETIES. LEAGUE AND PAN AM REPRESENTATIVES FLEW TO NEW YORK JUNE 25 TO SEEK FAVORABLE CAB RECONSIDERATION. EMBASSY IN THIS MESSAGE PROVIDES MATERIAL SUGGESTED IN REFTEL AND REQUESTS CONTINUING STRONGEST DEPARTMENT SUPPORT TO OBTAIN TOTAL CAB TURNAROUND. END SUMMARY

1. THE EMBASSY IS EXTREMELY GRATEFUL FOR THE LUCID, THOROUGH REFTEL WHICH WAS THE FIRST SPELLED-OUT ACCOUNT OF THE LEAGUE'S TROUBLES WITH CAB WHICH HAS BEEN RECEIVED HERE. SUBSEQUENTLY, HOWEVER, MORE OF THE SAME INFORMATION HAS BECOME AVAILABLE FROM PAN AM, FINNAIR AND THE LEAGUE ITSELF.

2. OUR MAJOR CONCERN IS THAT BEFORE THE CAB CAN MAKE A FULL STUDY, THE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED TEN-YEAR-OLD TRADITION OF LEAGUE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FLIGHTS TO AND FROM THE U.S. WILL HAVE BEEN KILLED AND THIS WE

WISH TO AVOID AT ALL COSTS. MUCH IS AT STAKE, THE REPUTATION OF THE U.S., OF THE LEAGUE, THE FISCAL VIABILITY OF A TROUBLED BUT MAJOR AMERICAN AIRLINE, FINNISH AND AMERICAN RELATIONS, THE ENORMOUSLY FRUITFUL ACTIVITIES OF THE LEAGUE, OF WHICH THE FLIGHTS ARE BUT A MINOR PART, AS WELL AS THE DELETERIOUS EFFECT OF CUTTING OFF THIS VITAL EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

3. JUNE 25 LEAGUE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AIMO HUTTANEN AND PAN AM'S MANAGER IN HELSINKI, ASSER LEPPANEN, FLEW TO NEW YORK TO ATTEMPT RESTORATION OF LEAGUE FLIGHTS. THEY HOPED ENGAGE AMERICAN ATTORNEY TO ASSIST THEM.

4. PROBLEM IS IMMEDIATE BECAUSE OF FULL PROGRAM OF SUMMER FLIGHTS, AND NOT JUST PAN AM'S, BEGINNING NEXT WEEK. IT IS FOR THIS REASON URGENT DEPARTMENT INTERVENTION IS VITALLY NECESSARY.

5. EMBASSY BELIEVES CAB HAS AN ENTIRELY ERRONEOUS CONCEPTION OF THE LEAGUE'S CHARTER FLIGHT SET-UP AND PURPOSE. WE ALSO SUSPECT-- AS PAN AM DOES -- THAT SOME DISGRUNTLED PERSON HAS BEEN GIVING MISINFORMATION TO THE CAB. WHATEVER THE LEAGUE'S PROBLEMS, IT IS CERTAINLY WILLING TO CHANGE ITS MODUS OPERANDI, INCLUDING MODIFYING ITS BY-LAWS, TO MEET CAB CRITERIA. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS REQUIRES TIME, FOR LEGALLY A GENERAL MEETING OF THE LEAGUE IS REQUIRED TO CHANGE THE RULES. LEAGUE WILL WANT HEAR FROM CAB CLEAR STATEMENT OF WHAT IS NEEDED IF AFTER REVIEW CAB BELIEVES LEAGUE MUST MAKE BASIC CHANGES.

6. WHAT HUTTANEN AND LEPPANEN SEEK, AND WHICH THE EMBASSY HOPES THE DEPARTMENT WILL ASSIST, IS A WAIVER TO PERMIT PLANNED LEAGUE FLIGHTS UNTIL THE CAB CAN HAVE A CHANCE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WE BELIEVE TO BE THE TRUE CHARACTER OF THE LEAGUE'S CHARTER FLIGHT PROGRAM AND/OR FOR THE LEAGUE TO CHANGE ITS OWN REGULATIONS TO ENABLE IT TO SATISFY CAB OF ITS CHARTER WORTHINESS.

7. LEAGUE, LIKE MANY SUCH ORGANIZATIONS IN FINLAND, HAS GROWN UP OVER THE YEARS OF THIS CENTURY. IT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAS BEEN AN EVOLUTION WHICH HAS SUITED FINNISH SOCIETY AND ITS POLITICAL NECESSITIES. EACH CHAPTER OF THE LEAGUE IS FULLY REPRESENTED AS A VOTING MEMBER IN THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS -- WHICH DETERMINE THE TOTAL POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND PROGRAMS OF THE LEAGUE -- WHEN THE BOARD IS ELECTED. NINETEEN OF THE TWENTY-FOUR BOARD MEMBERS ARE FROM THE CHAPTERS. IN THE TRUEST SENSE, AND OFFICERS OF THE EMBASSY HAVE BEEN OBSERVING THIS FOR YEARS, THE BOARD REPRESENTS THE INTERESTS OF THE MEMBERS.

8. FYI DEPARTMENT ONLY: YOU MAY USE THIS WITH CAB AT YOUR DISCRETION. ONE REASON LEAGUE AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN FINLAND USE THE FOREGOING SYSTEM IS TO PREVENT THEIR TAKE-OVER BY MAOISTS, TAISTOISTS AND SIMILAR FAR-OUT COMMUNIST GROUPS TAKING OVER INNOCENT, WORTHY ORGANIZATIONS. THE MOST RECENT HORRIFIC EXAMPLE OF THIS IS TEINILIIITO, FINLAND'S NATIONWIDE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT UNION, WHICH IS SUPPORTED FINANCIALLY BY THE GOVERNMENT AND WHICH ENJOYS REAL POWER IN THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. THE STALINIST YOUTH IN THE LAST EIGHTEEN MONTHS HAVE TAKEN TEINILIIITO OVER IN WHAT IS NOW A NATIONAL SCANDAL. THIS HAS SERIOUSLY INTIMIDATED LEGITIMATE ORGANIZATIONS WHO NOW REALIZE IT COULD HAPPEN TO THEM TOO.
END FYI.

9. THE DEPARTMENT'S POINT ABOUT FOREIGN POLICY AND THE CAB IS UNDERSTOOD, BUT WE BELIEVE IT MUST PLAY A CERTAIN ROLE IN THE CAB'S CONSIDERATIONS. AS THE DEPARTMENT KNOWS, THE EMBASSY AND THE LEAGUE HAVE BEEN WAGING A VERY DIFFICULT AND NOT ALWAYS SUCCESSFUL FIGHT TO MATCH THE PREPONDERANCE OF ANTI-AMERICAN MISINFORMATION LADLED OUT DAILY IN THE PUBLIC PRINTS, AND IN THE TELEVISION AND RADIO MEDIA OF FINLAND. BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THINGS, THE MEDIA CANNOT HIT AT THE USSR AND HER ALLIES BUT IS FREE TO HIT AT THE U.S. AND THE WEST. ACCORDINGLY, A MAIN WEAPON OF OURS HAS HAD TO BE EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE. THE LEAGUE'S CHARTER PROGRAM HAS BEEN A MAINSTAY OF THIS PROGRAM. ITS ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE TO THE U.S. NEED NOT BE SPELLED OUT HERE, BUT WE DO NOTE THAT PANAM COUNTS HEAVILY ON LEAGUE CHARTERS AND URGENTLY ASKS OUR FULLEST SUPPORT WITH THE CAB ON BEHALF OF THE LEAGUE.

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10. IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD TOO THAT THE CHARTERS ARE ONLY A MINOR PART OF THE LEAGUE'S ACTIVITIES. THOUGH THEY ARE A WORTHY AND NECESSARY ACTIVITY, AND IN FULL ACCORD WITH U.S. OBJECTIVES IN FINLAND, BOTH POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY, AND THOUGH THEY HAVE ENABLED THOUSANDS OF FINNS AND AMERICANS TO COME TOGETHER IN A REAL CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND COMMUNION, THEY ARE BY NO MEANS THE MAJOR PART OF THE LEAGUE'S WORK.

11. PEOPLE DON'T JOIN THE LEAGUE JUST TO BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR CHARTER FLIGHTS, ALTHOUGH WITH MANY THAT IS ONE OF THE REASONS THEY JOIN, OF COURSE. LEAGUE MEMBERS TAKE PART IN MANY OTHER ACTIVITIES. OUR SPEAKERS BUREAU ALONE GIVES A MINIMUM OF FIFTY LECTURES YEARLY TO LEAGUE CHAPTERS OR LEAGUE-SPONSORED PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT FINLAND. THE LEAGUE, WHICH WAS COURAGEOUSLY BEGUN IN 1943 TO SHOW FINNISH KINSHIP TO THE U.S. BEGAN SENDING FINNS TO THE UNITED STATES AS GRANTEES AS EARLY AS 1945. THE LEAGUE IS A FOUNDING PARTNER OF THE FULBRIGHT ASLA PROGRAM WHICH HAS SENT THOUSANDS OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE GRANTEES TO THE U.S. THE LEAGUE, IN CONCERT WITH THE EMBASSY AND DEPARTMENT SENDS TWO FINNS ANNUALLY TO THE U.S. AS A PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL VISITORS PROGRAM.

12. THE LEAGUE IS AN OLD AND ESTABLISHED TRADITIONAL ORGANIZATION IN THIS COUNTRY. IT RECEIVES A SMALL SUBSIDY FROM THE GOF AND AN ANNUAL CASH GRANT, ALSO MODEST, FROM USIS.
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ITS CHARTER FLIGHTS, WHICH ONLY BEGAN IN 1965 AND WHICH ARE A MINOR PORTION OF THE OVERALL PROGRAM, ARE AS STATED IN THE BY-LAWS A MEANS OF ARRANGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS IN FINLAND TO VISIT ECONOMICALLY THE U.S. AND FOR MEMBERS IN THE U.S. TO VISIT FINLAND.

13. THE LEAGUE, AT CONSIDERABLE EXPENSE, ANNUALLY SPONSORS AN "AMERICA DAYS" IN FINLAND WHICH IS ALWAYS A MAJOR EMBASSY EVENT AND WHICH HAS HAD SUCH SPEAKERS AS W. AVERILL HARRIMAN, LYNDON B. JOHNSON AND GEORGE F. KENNAN. THIS YEAR IT BRINGS, WITH DEPARTMENT AID, JESSE OWENS AS THE GUEST OF HONOR. THE LEAGUE OPERATES ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSES, SPONSORS OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS IN THE U.S. AND IN FINLAND, BOTH IN COOPERATION WITH THE EMBASSY AND USIS, AS WELL AS ON ITS OWN. IT SENDS FINNISH ARTISTS AND ENTERTAINERS TO THE U.S. AND BRINGS AMERICAN ARTISTS AND ENTERTAINERS TO FINLAND. ITS ACADEMIC EXCHANGE IS OLD AND HONORABLE. IT WORKS IN

CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH THE AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE, YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING, AND THE AMERICAN SCANDANAVIAN FOUNDATION WITH WHICH IT HAS OVER YEARS SENT HUNDREDS OF FINNISH LABOR TRAINEES TO THE U.S.

14. THE LEAGUE HAS TEN EMPLOYEES IN ITS OFFICE, ONE ONLY OF WHOM WORKS ON CHARTER FLIGHTS. IN 1974 ALONE, IT CARRIED OUT IN THIS COUNTRY 622 SEPARATE EVENTS AND PROGRAMS, SOME WITH THE EMBASSY-USIS, SOME ALONE.

15. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, THE LEAGUE STRICTLY ENFORCES THE SIX MONTHS ELIGIBILITY RULE FOR CHARTERS. IT IS PLAINLY INACCURATE TO SAY THE LEAGUE WAS FORMED SOLELY FOR POOLING MEMBERSHIPS FOR CHARTERS. IT'S JUST NOT TRUE. AS IS CLEAR FROM THIS MESSAGE, CHARTERS ARE ONLY A SMALL PART OF LEAGUE WORK. THAT THE BY-LAWS LIST THE CHARTER PROGRAM IS LOGICAL. THE LEAGUE AND THE U.S. MISSION TO FINLAND WANT FINNS AND AMERICANS TO TRAVEL TO EACH OTHER'S COUNTRY. THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE IS IN FAVOR OF THIS TRAVEL TOO. THE USIS FINLAND COUNTRY PLAN MEMORANDUM CITES LEAGUE SUPPORT AND ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING CHARTERS. THE GOF WARMLY ENCOURAGES LEAGUE ACTIVITIES.

16. THE POINT IN PARAGRAPH TWO ABOUT AFFINITY CONTACTS
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NONPLUSES US. THE LEAGUE CONFIRMS OUR LONGTIME OBSERVATION THAT SOME TRAVELERS ARE FINNS OR AMERICANS WHO HAVE TRAVELED AS TEACHERS, ENTERTAINERS, LECTURERS, ALL LEGITIMATE LEAGUE MEMBERS AND GOOD FRIENDS OF FINNISH-AMERICAN INTERESTS.

17. EMBASSY LOATH TO OVERLOAD DEPARTMENT WITH FURTHER ARGUMENTATION. IF CONTENTS THIS MESSAGE INSUFFICIENT, WE ARE PLEASED TO SUPPLY MORE AS SUGGESTED. DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER USING EXPERTISE IN WASHINGTON GLEANED FROM SIX YEARS RECENT SERVICE IN FINLAND AS PRINCIPAL LIAISON OFFICER BETWEEN EMBASSY AND LEAGUE OF USIA NORDIC DESK OFFICER, IRVIN RANTANEN. IF HE REVIEWED THIS CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE HE COULD BE A USEFUL ADVOCATE IN NEW YORK.

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